

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 304903

NODIS

FOR DR BRZEZINSKI

FOLLOWING REPEAT LUSAKA 3901 ACTION STATE LONDON INFO DAR ES
SALAAM GABORONE LAGOS LILONGWE MAPUTO PRETORIA USUN DEC 22.

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 3901

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

USUN FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV RH US UK

SUBJ: RHODESIA: NEED FOR PUBLIC STATEMENT

1. IN SPITE OF OUR BEST EFFORTS, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE
CONFUSION AND SKEPTICISM IN LUSAKA ABOUT WHERE THE BRITISH
STAND ON CONTINUING RHODESIAN NEGOTIATIONS. DIPLOMATIC
COLLEAGUES
WITH VIEWS AS WIDELY SEPARATED AS THE KENYAN,
SOVIET AND GUYANAN AMBASSADORS HERE HAVE ASKED US WHAT
THE STATUS WAS OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS AND WHETHER
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WE ARE STILL PURSUING THEM. SO HAVE SENIOR ZAMBIAN OFFICIALS.
CRITICISM OF OWEN'S RECENT STATEMENTS HAVE CALLED ATTENTION
TO HIS AMBIGUOUS POSITION TOWARDS THE INTERNAL TALKS NOW
GOING ON. FURTHER, CRITICISM OF OWEN'S STATEMENT ON THE
CHIMOIO RAIDS DRAMATIZED WHAT MANY HERE CONSIDER TO BE
BRITISH RETREAT FROM THEIR FORTHRIGHT POSITION IN VIGOROUS
PURSUIT OF A SETTLEMENT BASED ON OUR SEPTEMBER 1ST PROPOSAL.

2. SINCE WE BECAME INVOLVED IN THE INITIATIVE, WE HAVE OPERATED ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT WE WOULD CONSULT WITH THE PARTIES AND ATTEMPT TO PUT TOGETHER A PROPOSAL WHICH WAS REASONABLE, IMPARTIAL AND PRACTICAL. OBSTACLES HAVE CONSTANTLY ARISEN WHICH THREW OUR EFFORT INTO QUESTION-- ARREST BY SMITH OF ZAPU MEMBERS INSIDE OF RHODESIA IN JULY, THE OAU BENEDICTION OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND NKOMO'S DEMANDS THAT THE POWER BE TURNED OVER TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT IN AUGUST; SMITH'S ELECTION THE SAME MONTH; THEN SMITH'S VISIT TO LUSAKA AND KAUNDA'S CAPER. THROUGH THEM ALL WE CONTINUED TO GO ABOUT OUR JOB OF BROADENING COMMON GROUND ON A PROPOSED SOLUTION. HOWEVER, IT IS ONLY RECENTLY WITH THE INITIATION OF THE INTERNAL NEGOTIATIONS IN SALISBURY THAT OUR CONTINUING INTENTIONS HAVE BEEN SERIOUSLY QUESTIONED BY AFRICANS.

3. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THAT OWEN MAY HAVE DOMESTIC PROBLEMS WHICH CONSTRAIN HIM FROM PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON SMITH'S INTERNAL NEGOTIATION, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE HELPFUL AT THIS STAGE FOR HIM TO MAKE A CLEAR PUBLIC STATEMENT DECLARING HIS FIRM SUPPORT FOR THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS AS THE BEST SOLUTION AVAILABLE AND HIS INTENTION TO CONTINUE EFFORTS TO OBTAIN AGREEMENT FROM THE PARTIES BASED UPON THEIR PRINCIPLES.

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4. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL IF THE SECRETARY COULD MAKE A STATEMENT TO THIS EFFECT. LOW UNQUOTE VANCE

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